



Congressman

Jim Saxton

NEWS RELEASE

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LBI Project Pact Approved in Washington, D.C.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers H.Q. OK's Cooperation Agreement

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jim Saxton (NJ-3rd) said today that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) headquarters in Washington has approved the Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the State of New Jersey and the federal government.

"This is yet another big step for the long-term plan to repair and protect LBI beaches, homes, businesses and public property," Saxton said. "Without the PCA, the project cannot advance. I expect a formal signing of the PCA by the parties in the next few weeks. The LBI project should go to bid soon after that. Work— actually moving of sand— could begin along some parts of the island as early as year's end."

This afternoon Saxton met with the head of the USACE, Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock, to express appreciation to USACE and its Philadelphia District for their efforts to push the project ahead. Strock visited the congressman's Capitol Hill office to discuss the project. The PCA cites areas of local cooperation and cost sharing, and is required before the USACE can undertake a water resource project.

LBI was severely damaged by a powerful storm in 1962, sustaining damage to 1,200 homes and businesses worth over \$100 million in today's dollars. Since the island is far more populated today, the potential damage from a similar storm is expected to be significantly greater.

Saxton obtained over \$3 million from 1993-2003 to design and engineer a repair plan, and \$1.7 million toward future construction in 2004-2005. In May, he added another \$5 million for construction to the federal FY 2006 budget, enough to begin the first phase of construction. The money was later included in the Senate, and a final passage is expected in the fall.

"There are over 8,000 residents of the island who find themselves at risk of hurricanes and Nor'Easters year-after-year," Saxton said. "Finally, there is light at the end of the tunnel. We will be able to begin repairing the beaches from multiple storms of the 1990s."

Three storms hit the island in unusual succession between early 1991 and late 1992, resulting in severe erosion. The LBI project is designed to repair that damage.

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